

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 167546
ORIGIN IO-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:IO/HDC:EDDIE EDWARDS

APPROVED BY:IO/S-A:TERRE BROWN

IO/HDC:ROBERT ANDREW

-----123702 010734Z /14

R 010101Z JUL 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION GENEVA 3902

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 167546

FOLLOWING REPEAT QUITO 4406 ACTION SECSTATE INFO GUAYAQUIL
DATED JUN 28:

QTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 4406

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, EC

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH FINANCE MINISTER ON PERFORMANCE OF
CUSTOMS POLICE IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT.

1. THE CHARGE MET WITH FINANCE MINISTER JUAN REYNA
ON JUNE 26 TO DISCUSS THE INADEQUATE PERFORMANCE OF
THE CUSTOMS MILITARY POLICE IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT.
THE CHARGE POINTED OUT THE SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF
USG TO CUSTOMS MILITARY POLICE WITH VERY LIMITED RESULTS
OVER THE YEARS IN TERMS OF NARCOTICS SEIZURES. COM-
PARISONS WERE MADE OF TOTAL SEIZURES FOR CURRENT YEAR
WITH THOSE OF PREVIOUS YEARS, SHOWING A DECLINE FOR 1977
AND THE YEAR THUS FAR OF 1978. THE CHARGE CITED THE ALLEGED
COMMITMENT OF GOE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS TO CARRY OUT A
MORE VIGOROUS NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM, AND STATED
THAT THE MILITARY CUSTOMS POLICE PERFORMANCE DOES NOT
SUBSTANTIATE THE GOE DECLARED COMMITMENT. DURING THE
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PAGE 02 STATE 167546

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF HOW TO OBTAIN BETTER PERFORMANCE,
THE CHARGE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL IN-
CENTIVES FOR CUSTOMS POLICEMEN TO MAKE NARCOTICS SEIZURES.

2. THE MINISTER OF FINANCE STATED THAT SINCE HE HAD
TAKEN OFFICE TWO MONTHS AGO HE HAD STRESSED TO THE
CUSTOMS POLICE THE NEED FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE IN

NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT. HE SAID THAT THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, ATTORNEY GENERAL AND HE HAD MET SEVERAL TIMES TO DISCUSS WAYS TO LIVE UP TO THE GOE'S COMMITMENT TO IMPROVED NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT AND PREVENTION, AND HE PROMISED THAT HE WOULD GIVE EVEN FURTHER ATTENTION TO THE MATTER WITHIN HIS MINISTRY. HE AGREED THAT SOMETHING NEEDED TO BE BUILT INTO THE SYSTEM TO REWARD MILITARY CUSTOMS POLICEMEN FOR SEIZURES OF NARCOTICS, AND SAID HE HIMSELF WOULD EXPLORE WHAT MIGHT BE DONE.

3. COMMENT: THE FINANCE MINISTER APPEARED TO BE SINCERE IN HIS PLEDGE TO TRY TO IMPROVE MILITARY CUSTOMS POLICE NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT EFFORT. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT SEIZURES HAD DECLINED FROM 1976. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT CHARGE'S REPRESENTATION AND SUBSEQUENT FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS WITH THE CUSTOMS POLICE WILL BRING A GREATER ATTENTION TO NARCOTICS CONTROL AND THEREBY CONTRIBUTE TO THE MISSION'S EFFORTS TO IMPEDE THE FLOW OF ILLICIT DRUGS TO THE UNITED STATES. CORR UNQTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLICE FORCES, CUSTOMS ADMINISTRATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE167546
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/HDC:EDDIE EDWARDS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780272-0218
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197807102/aaaadijp.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3762566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1853627
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH FINANCE MINISTER ON PERFORMANCE OF CUSTOMS POLICE IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT.
TAGS: SNAR, EC, US
To: GENEVA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3762566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014